

child study

By-lines

A quarterly journal of parent education

Spring 1951

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The cover photograph is by HARRIET ARNOLD.

Midcentury conference

It has become a tradition that every ten years the President of the United States calls together from every corner of the land people whose special concern is the health, education, and welfare of children. The purpose is to consider the needs of children and youth, and to plan for their interests in the next decade. Since the first one in 1909, the White House Conferences have steadily grown in size and significance.

The Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth met in December, 1950, overcast by the mounting threat of world war. It was, perhaps, unique in the unfaltering courage and determination of its members that plans for children must not lag even while we prepare to meet immediate drains on the nation's resources.

The Conference differed from its predecessors, too, in that it emphasized the emotional needs of children. Whereas previous Conference programs had dealt largely with questions of health and social welfare, the 1950 Conference announced as its purpose "to consider how we can develop in children the mental, emotional, and spiritual qualities essential to individual happiness and to responsible citizenship, and what physical, economic, and social conditions are deemed necessary to this development."

Such a far-reaching program could not, of course, be encompassed in five days. Actually the work of the Conference began almost two years before the convocation date—began in small and large groups that met in small and large communities across the land. Work reports on community projects and programs, and the pooled thinking of lay and professional groups as well as of just plain people everywhere, were all siphoned into the thirty-five work groups; here the five thousand Conference delegates thrashed out their recommendations for submission to the final plenary session. In this way the thousands who could not attend were also heard. Represented were every state and territory of the Union and every profession and vocation, including parenthood, concerned with the welfare of children and youth.

In this Conference, too, at long last, the voices of young people themselves were heard and heeded. Some five hundred representatives of youth organizations were *Continued on page 24*

The freedom to be different

Children can live comfortably with their differences
when they have understanding
help and guidance

By Alice V. Keliher

It is a truism that "it takes all kinds to make a world." No two people are, can be, or really want to be alike. Our differences make us *ourselves*. It is by our differences that we can be recognized and called by name. But in our culture some differences are taken for granted, some become assets, and still others are difficult to get along with.

How can parents help their youngsters to deal with individual differences? In helping boys and girls to accept and to cope with differences in themselves, parents help to free them to take their place in the world with assurance and self-confidence; in helping them to accept differences in *others*, parents foster their children's ability to live in harmony with people of varied personalities, backgrounds, and beliefs.

Acceptance begins at home

Like so many facets of the healthy personality, acceptance of differences begins at home. And it begins not only *with* the parents but *in* them. If his mother and father feel apologetic about a low income, their explanation to six-year-old Dick that he can't have new clothes like his pal because the family can't afford them doesn't make Dick feel much better; probably he'll still feel self-conscious about his hand-me-downs and worn, faded corduroys. Telling eleven-year-old Peggy that wearing braces on her teeth doesn't really make her less attractive doesn't help Peggy much unless she can be sure

that her parents actually feel this to be true.

In other words, parents themselves must accept their own and their children's differences before the children can effectively cope with them. The parents need not necessarily like or enjoy the differences. To help the children handle them, however, they need to be able to deal with the deviations with equanimity, to appraise the situation and go on from there. It is fine to advise boys and girls to play up their good features, to develop the skills they have in order to make up for those they lack. But the children cannot take such advice seriously and whole-heartedly unless the parents themselves value the good features and the compensating skills.

All this is easier to say than to do. Sometimes it requires professional help. Sometimes an honest evaluation of the differences and what they mean leads to a realization of their actual importance and what can be done about them. Sometimes it's impossible to change or to minimize or to compensate for differences; the parents and the children alike have to find ways to live comfortably with them.

Often it is difficult to relinquish fond dreams of what children would be like. It is not always easy to accept children as they are. A mother who was the town beauty and the town belle may feel aggrieved that her daughter Ann is so homely and has so few social graces. An intellectual, sophisticated father may wonder

how he happened to get a son like Michael who can't make the grade at school and, after school, devotes himself exclusively to comics and television and the corner drugstore.

It's just possible that Ann's grandmother was an earnest, serious woman who feared that her daughter would never settle down, and that John's grandfather was a glad-hander, a football star who worried because his son was a bookworm. A realization that everyone—including children, of course—has his own temperament and tempo, interests and capacities can help such parents.

From their parents, too, children learn to accept individual variations in others. When differences of whatever nature don't matter to the parents, they are not likely to matter to the children either. Children are usually not aware of the superficial differences in color, creed, grandparentage when they have the opportunity, from the time they are little, to grow in friendly appreciation of each other's individual characteristics.

As with all children, those who are different need to feel that they are genuinely loved and wanted for themselves alone—not despite their differences and not because of them, but for themselves as individuals.

And of course there are practical ways, too, in which parents can help their boys and girls to feel comfortable about their deviations.

Boys who are too short

At fourteen, Pete still looked like a little boy. He grinned, sometimes, when his friends called him Shorty. But he went through a period of teasing the girls and boys, and of making a general nuisance of himself.

Marked physical variations can be a source of great pain and insecurity. The short boy goes through inner agonies during his early teens; he fears he will not grow up to match the popular conception of the tall, handsome male. If his friends begin to shoot up while he stands still, he may begin to heckle and show off to make himself noticed, as Pete did. He may retreat from his group, especially if he is teased by his friends. He is especially hurt by thoughtless comments from parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins, whether they

be teasing or sympathizing. He needs understanding help.

When Paul was fourteen, his friends were sprouting way beyond him. One evening Paul's father sat down with the boy and pointed out that the growth pattern in their family was slow. Until they were sixteen, Paul's father and uncle were much shorter than their friends. Even as adults they were short, stocky men. Paul's father said he did not suffer over his stockiness. In college he was a wrestling champion, and the six-footers had nothing on him. In a culture that still overvalues height, such clear facing of hereditary patterns is good sense.

But sometimes, of course, a youngster does not follow the family pattern. Paul might have come from a long line of tall men, and still have been short. Even so, his father might have explained that sometimes individuals have different growth patterns, that some boys lengthen out early in their teens and others later.

Helping a short boy—or one who is extra tall or fat or thin—to attain prowess in some field where he can win the esteem and approval of his friends regardless of build may also lessen his anxiety. Paul will never be a stellar athlete. If athletics are important to him, however, perhaps he can become manager of the team, or cheerleader. But despite the heroes of the football gridiron and the baseball diamond, there are other fields where the Shorties and the Pauls can make their mark. These boys may be especially adept at debating, at singing in the school orchestra, at designing model airplanes or painting scenery for a class play or organizing group excursions.

Girls who are too tall

Susan, at fourteen, is already five feet ten inches. She refuses to go to the school dances with the shorter boys and has begun to slouch to make herself seem shorter.

One of Susan's fears is that she will grow still taller. Here again, facts are important. Susan will be relieved to hear that many girls grow with seeming suddenness at about fourteen or fifteen and reach their full height in one year. Family attitudes are supremely important. Expressions of concern, teasing, even sympathy are cruel burdens for this girl who

already has to adjust to drastic changes. Any comments that are made can emphasize Susan's good features.

Not that her height should be disregarded. Susan will be helped by her parents' understanding of how she feels. Susan will find comfort in the knowledge that many exclusive shops employ tall girls as models, that in some cities there are stores which cater particularly to the many tall women.

Even more important, Susan can be helped to dress to suit her height. One girl who towered above her friends affected tall hats, dresses with long, simple lines, and high heels. This may have been sheer bravado, dramatic and attention-getting though it was. Most Susans are more at ease after they have learned how to get themselves up in a way to make them appear shorter—flat heels as well as flat hairdos, clothes that, through design and the use of colors, tend to cut off rather than build up. Fashion magazines and magazines for teenagers often give advice on such matters; some of them fill mail orders, as do stores and some clothing manufacturers. And salesclerks in dress departments know many of the answers, too.

Susan's posture is likely to improve along with her confidence that she is dressing to make the most, or the least, of her build—and, of course, with her knowledge that, though they appreciate her present concern, her parents really do not share it.

Children who are too fat

Recently George has put on a lot of weight. He refuses to go to summer camp, an experience he has enjoyed for three years.

George doesn't say so to his parents, but he is embarrassed about his size. One of the boys called him Fanny, until George lit into him. Strangely, with all his worry about fat, George has taken to eating all the time. His mother has heard that all growing boys eat a lot, and she encourages his eating. After all, it was only a short time ago that it was hard to get him to finish a meal.

There are many like George. Just before the height-gaining period, fat seems to pile on around the hips. Both boys and girls may ex-

perience it. Generally speaking, the fat seems to be absorbed during the growth spurt. And knowledge of this will be comforting to the youngster.

Of course growing boys eat a lot. But George's mother can serve meals reasonably designed to keep the weight from piling up. And George can learn to limit between-meal snacks to fruits and fruit juices.

He can be encouraged, too, to spend more time out of doors than beside the radio or television set. If he is sensitive about playing with boys who can run faster and easier, perhaps on weekends and holidays and in the early evenings the whole family can enjoy skating or swimming or hiking together, or a fast game of ball in the back yard. A bit of exercise will probably be good for Mom and Pop, too!

Sometimes it is difficult for a parent to make suggestions about diet and exercise—or choosing the most becoming clothes—at a time when parental advice may be felt by the youngster to be criticism and therefore a sign of rejection. When this is so, perhaps a trusted adult friend or a loved teacher or the family doctor can make the suggestions.

Medical advice is important at all times. For the really obese child, it is imperative. In these days of mounting insecurity, a good many people have the impulse to find comfort in overeating. Because of the embarrassment, the obese child may seek to withdraw from contact with others, thus increasing the loneliness and, along with it, the desire for food. So obesity can have psychological causes, such as loneliness and fear of not belonging, and these worries enter a kind of vicious circle with the glandular and dietary difficulties. Somewhere the circle must be broken. The doctor may prescribe a reducing diet or some other suitable means of weight control.

On the question of weight—over and under—we are still too driven by the old theory of the "normal height-weight relationship." For a number of years, height-weight cards were given out at school (and this practice persists in some schools). Today various factors are considered, and we know that children vary in physical as well as in personality characteristics.

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How different may one be?

Some paradoxes in the fundamental
need to conform and
the desire to be oneself

By David Riesman

It is quite easy to blame parents—and for parents to blame themselves—for the pressures they put on their children to conform and for the anxiety with which they respond to signs of genuine difference in their children. But before we parents assume too much guilt about these pressures, and before we become too anxious about our anxiety, we ought to recognize the degree to which we are responding to the subtle social changes that have come about in the last generation. For they have altered both our opportunities and our tasks in child rearing.

In an earlier day, parents and other authorities held out to children certain objective goals: they should get rich, for one thing, or become great scholars, or maybe even become president. And parents drove their children toward these goals. The traits of character which mattered were such things as diligence, honesty, and thrift—the injunctions of Ben Franklin's Almanac. If the child delivered the goods according to these reasonably clear criteria, it mattered rather less what he was like as a person; parents neither knew enough to observe his psychological make-up nor were they very interested in it. As a member of society's work-force the child would be expected to produce, rather than to be a particularly well-adjusted or even happy person. Thus both his character, with its implanted goals, and his situation, as he turned to make his living or his mark, combined to intensify the demands made on him as

a producer, while the demands made on him as a person were slight. This gave him a certain freedom to be different, provided he did his work adequately.

What matters about the individual in today's economy is less his capacity to produce than his capacity to be a member of a team. Business and professional success now depend much more than ever before on one's ability to work in a team in far-flung personnel networks; the man who works too hard or in too solitary a way is, by and large, almost as unwelcome in the executive offices, the universities, or the hospitals of urban America as he would be in a union shop. He cannot satisfy society's demands on him simply by being good at his job; he has to be good, but he has also to be cooperative. When translated into child-rearing practices, this means that parents who want their children to get along and to succeed will be quite as concerned with their adjustment in the school group as with their grades or with their industry on an after-school job.

I don't mean to suggest that parents consciously calculate their children's job-chances and train the youngsters accordingly. Rather, the same great and still not fully understood social changes that have altered the nature of attitudes toward work and the worker have also influenced the home (the parents, or at least the father, are also workers), the school, the movies and radio and other institutions

which divide among themselves, in none too friendly a fashion, the tasks of defining the goals for modern children.

Accent on popularity

These goals are no longer clear-cut. The older goals—such as sheer money-making—were often shallow and have been to a considerable degree abandoned. New goals—such as a full and happy life—have not yet had a chance to become more than vague mandates that cannot guide a parent or a child from day to day. Consequently there is every opportunity for one goal, namely popularity, to outstrip all others in importance. This is a means of rating the child when there is no other means available. Parents can no longer prefer to have a child who is diligent to a child who is “one of the gang.” So parents, too, though perhaps with some misgivings, share the concern with popularity. Unlike their predecessors of the Victorian Age, they know—from the teacher, the P.T.A., their own children—what the popularity score is.

Marginal differences

Matters would be relatively simple for parent and child if the market demanded complete conformists. Then, at least, expectations would be clear—and rebellion against them equally clear. But matters are not simple. What is expected of children and adults, in the middle and upper educated strata at least, actually *is* difference—but not too much. That is, one must be different enough to attract attention, to *be* a personality, to be labeled and tagged. One brand of cigarettes must be distinguishable by name, package, and advertising claims from the others; one magazine from the other magazines; one university from the others.

This difference-but-not-too-much is what I term “marginal differentiation,” and I suggest that it is to be found not only in the economic area of brand-name competition but also in the area of individual personality. Progressive parents, taught for the last several decades to “accept” their children, have learned to welcome a certain amount of rebelliousness or difference. Likewise, business and the professions, especially perhaps in the growing number of fields

catering to consumption and leisure, welcome a certain amount of eccentricity, if this goes together with a cooperative team spirit. Thus children often find themselves in the paradoxical position in which their “difference” is simply evidence that they are conventional and up-to-date. Perhaps more important, they are compelled to learn to find their way among exceedingly subtle expectations on the part of others. They are expected both to be spontaneous and not to disrupt the mood of a particular group; to a degree they must conform and yet maintain the personality they have already built up by earlier efforts at marginal differentiation.

We may take an example from what goes on in some progressive schools. Paintings by children which once would have been considered utterly outlandish are now praised by the teacher and hung on the wall for all to see. Children who once would have had to recite “The Song of Hiawatha” are encouraged to read aloud their own free verse. On the whole this is a great advance over earlier hardships and injustices, as we can remind ourselves any day by reading the novels and biographies of men and women who did not escape—or who saw others who did not escape—being crushed by their parents and teachers in earlier generations.

Yet the advance has, as always, brought new perplexities. We have come to see that children who are deprived of the opportunity of taking moderate risks in being different ordinarily conform while pretending to be different. (On rare occasions, some may go in search of an eccentricity so great and so provoking as to transcend marginal differentiation and the tolerance of the progressive community.) Even the much better understanding of children which parents and teachers have today is sometimes an ambiguous blessing; it can carry a threat to the child who is unable to guard by privacy and protective coloration his experiments at being different.

The importance of “other-direction”

As I have already indicated, it is the child’s peers who control the commodity most in demand, popularity, and it is sensitivity to their unstable expectations that lead the child to ex-

periment with the "right" blend of idiosyncratic and conforming tastes. Some of my investigations into adolescent groups lead me to suppose that on the whole girls are more subject to these group pressures than boys, for in order to win popularity or even acceptance among other girls they must manage to have neither too little nor too much popularity with boys. And while in many circles, boys' judgments of each other are influenced by how a boy rates with girls, this is less pervasive than the constraint imposed on girls by their subjection to the expectations of both sexes.

Thus, it is all too plain that parents and teachers face obstacles if they want—as many do want—to encourage the children in their charge to develop freely according to their own innate and acquired differences. As we have seen, one of the most subtle obstacles lies in the fact that such differences, up to a precarious and never clearly defined point, are actually assets. They are welcomed by employers and by the many groups trained in tolerance of differences of all sorts, racial, economic, religious, and personal.

Yet the very fact that a child can early learn to profit from being different—to have, for example, an individual style of talking or dancing—may endanger his actual awareness of his own qualities. The very things about him which are most individual, and which in an earlier era would have been carefully hidden, may be at the same time his trade-mark or advertisement in the popularity game. It is here that he loses his feeling for the solidity of his own self and tends to become merely the succession of roles the others—the omnipresent others—force on him. This leads to the development of a character type that I have come to call "other-directed," as contrasted with the "inner-directed" type of the preceding age.

In fact, if we think of our problems in terms of changes in character structure—changes, of course, connected with changes in social structure—we begin to realize both how limited are the alternatives open to parents and how great are the obstacles to genuine difference as compared with the specious individuality of marginal differentiation. True, parents in the middle and upper income and educational levels

want their children to be different and encourage them in self-expression. Yet at the same time they are not in a position to define the differences that will be accepted; acceptance of difference lies in the hands of the child's age-mates, as it will lie in the hands of his job-mates later on. And the parents themselves become concerned and anxious, and understandably so, if the child's age-mates reject him; they fear his differences are of the wrong sort, and perhaps, too, that their differences from their neighbors are of the wrong sort. Are they to defend their child's differences, then, at the cost of his undoubted present and possible future misery?

I think the answer to this crucial question depends at least in part on whether the parents are secure enough and capable enough to provide the child with an environment that will give him some protection against the expectations of his peers. They must offer him a way of life which will help him suffer less from his loneliness and his fear of it. They do this in part by altering the valuation put on loneliness and in part by encouraging interests that, while making his adjustment to his present group no easier, make his adjustment to a future group no more difficult.

A case in point

Let me take a specific, wholly imaginary case. It is, perhaps, not a very frequent case. It may be less frequent than that of parents who push their children into academic or aesthetic pursuits beyond the children's potential gifts and interests, injuring the children's self-esteem (since they cannot live up to adult expectations) and sacrificing their present happiness to an impossible future goal. But it is a case of a sort that, I believe, occurs more often as parents are taught the gospel of "adjustment to the group" and apply it both in their own lives and in their concern for their children.

Isobel is very gifted musically. Her parents and teachers eagerly encourage her musical zealousness. Already in her early teens her passionate preoccupation with music begins to set her apart somewhat from the other girls, not to mention boys, in her group who have no such

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By Kenneth B. Clark

How to protect children against prejudice

What are the effects

of prejudice on personality development?

What can we do to combat them?

The problem of the harmful effects of rejected minority status upon the personality development of children is one that must be dealt with effectively by enlightened parents, educators, and workers in the field of child welfare. The responsibility rests chiefly on the parents.

The author recently made a study designed

Basing their opinions on their own professional experiences and on the research of other scientists, of more than 500 social scientists

90% believe that segregation has detrimental personality effects on the segregated

83% believe that segregation has harmful psychological effects on those who do the segregating

These scientists mention as detrimental effects on those who are segregated

frustration

feelings of inferiority

feelings of being unwanted

feelings of persecution

submissiveness

martyrdom

withdrawal tendencies

ambivalence about their selves

aggressiveness

distortion in the sense of reality

This information is based on a recent survey by Max Deutscher and Isidor Chein as reported in "The Psychological Effects of Enforced Segregation: A Survey of Social Science Opinion," *Journal of Psychology*, 1948, 26, pp. 259-87.

to determine and to integrate the evidence on the effects of prejudice and discrimination on children in America today. The evidence strongly suggests that among minority-group children—children of minority races, religions, and some national backgrounds—are found not only subjective feelings of inferiority, loss of self-esteem, ambivalent attitudes toward their own group, but also patterns of overt behavior which seem to result from an inferior and rejected status. This behavior takes the form of direct or indirect hostility; aggressiveness toward individuals of the dominant group, other minority groups, or one's own group; compensatory and exhibitionistic patterns; withdrawal and submissive, defensive and repressive and other general patterns of behavior indicating racial hypersensitivity. These personality patterns seem to be formed early—by six or seven years of age.

At the same time, there is no evidence that a particular personality pattern or distortion exists among all children of a given minority group, nor is it the same for children of different minorities. There are variations in the type of adjustment which a particular individual makes to minority status. These variations seem to be related to such factors as economic and social position of the family, stability of the family pattern, security of the child within the family setting, intensity of in-group feeling, and to at present unclear individual differences

in basic personality structure, intelligence, aptitudes, and general abilities.

Maintaining self-esteem

The fundamental factor that determines the various manifestations of adjustment problems among children of rejected minority groups appears to be a rather deep-seated feeling of personal inadequacy. Basic self-esteem is lost or impaired. The reason for this is not difficult to understand. These youngsters learn from their neighborhoods, from schools and organizations, from magazines, books, radio, television, movies, that they and their group have been relegated to an inferior and humiliating role. As they become aware of this fact, they tend to accept it. They tend also to accept the social status assigned to them as a valid indication of their personal value—unless this impression is corrected by equally powerful forces.

Self-respect is essential to the dignity and integrity of every human being. Minority-group parents have a responsibility and an obligation to their children over and beyond that of other parents. It is up to them to counteract the negative social forces that tend to rob their children of self-esteem.

If they are going to assure their children of the minimum essentials for a healthy personality, they must provide them with the basic warmth, love, sympathetic understanding, and guidance which have been found so necessary to all children. These children need to know that their parents love and want them for their own sakes. This seems to be the basic cornerstone for the building of a healthy personality in these children; they cannot feel that they are of value unless they are given indications within the intimate family unit that they are valued.

A climate conducive to positive valuation of the self can be established only within the context of frank and honest appraisal of a child's abilities and of the immediate situation within which he is required to function. In the sympathetic guidance of the child, it seems essential to help him to achieve a sense of personal worth based upon actual accomplishment. Then he can learn to meet, accept, and overcome challenges. He can acquire a self-confidence that mere verbalizing will not produce. An over-

protected minority-group child — one who is isolated from realities by misdirected good intentions of parents who believe that insulating him from problems of realities is to his future welfare—is robbed of the experiences necessary to the building of a solid sense of the integrity of the self.

At this point, a word of caution appears necessary. It is most important that the aspirations of parents for their children be realistic as well as challenging. Standards of performance should be geared to a child's level of development, his intelligence and actual abilities. Presented with premature or too difficult goals, a child may develop a sense of personal failure. This can reinforce his inferiority feelings to such a degree that they become imbedded in his personality. Minority-group children, like other children, sometimes react to unrealistic pressure by withdrawal, resignation, a generalized lowering of aspirational level, or open rebellion.

On the other hand, if the goals are not challenging enough or if extravagant praise is given for normal achievements, a child may develop grandiose ideas of personal worth, a tendency toward a self-overvaluation, compensating and exhibitionistic patterns of behavior. While these patterns may be indulged by unrealistic, overprotective parents in the home, they interfere with normal adjustment of the child outside the home; they sometimes lead to rejection by his peers. It is reasonable to assume that such rejection intensifies the feelings of personal inadequacy; it may cause the child to become increasingly aggressive as he struggles desperately for the acceptance that his own behavior continues to deny him.

Recognizing the differences

Normal young children in the American culture have real questions concerning their racial identity and the value and status assigned to their group. At an early age, minority-group children are thrown into a fundamental conflict between their normal desire for self-esteem and society's negative evaluation of them. A child may have negative or ambivalent feelings about his own skin color or religion or national background.

Responsible parents do not evade, minimize,

or exaggerate the child's problems of this kind, but face them in a forthright manner. A child who is old enough to ask questions concerning racial, religious, and nationality problems is old enough to receive honest and appropriate answers. If the child is different in religion, skin color, or cultural background, nothing can be gained by telling him that he is not different or that all people are alike. He has, after all, perceived a difference. It is realistic to tell him that human beings do differ in their beliefs, in their appearance, in the way they do things, and that this is natural and desirable.

Children also ask questions about the inferior status assigned to other people of different colors and religions and backgrounds. These questions, too, require honest answers. "Yes, people are treated differently, and for unimportant reasons. Sometimes because their skin's a different color, or they haven't as much money as other people, or they go to a different church. This is called prejudice. It's *wrong* and *unfair* to treat people unkindly for such reasons, and to say mean things to them and about them. And also it is not democratic."

Such a frank statement of an elementary truth is one of the child's first lessons in social ethics. In addition, it can reassure him; it can help him realize that he is not to blame when people hate him for characteristics over which he has no control. He can be helped to understand and to feel that such hatred is not a sign of his inferiority. With understanding guidance, he can come to realize that prejudice is a sign of something inadequate in those people who have it and that it can be changed.

An older child can learn that prejudice is not always the fault of the people who hate, that they themselves are victims because they were taught to hate. This fact suggests that in the future such people may be taught a more positive way of getting along with others. This, however, may be too abstract an idea for younger children to grasp.

Prejudice as a shield

It may seem somewhat dogmatic to state that under no circumstances should the child be permitted to use his minority status as an excuse for undesirable personal characteristics. This

statement, however, seems necessary, and must be emphasized. Hiding behind the undesirable realities of prejudice and discrimination as a shield for personal inadequacy is unfortunately no less common among minority-group members than is the companion pattern of a prejudiced person hiding his personal inferiorities behind his prejudices. These patterns may have their beginning in later childhood or in adolescence. By dealing with them openly and directly when they first appear, parents help the child to cope with challenges of reality and to develop the necessary constructive patterns of personal adjustment.

Minority-group children need to learn that some kinds of behavior which result from social rejection are self-destructive. These boys and girls can be shown that aggressive, anti-social, and delinquent behavior is not likely to lead to personal effectiveness and constructive social change. While such behavior is natural and understandable within a pathological social setting, the child can be helped to direct his energies into channels that are more constructive so far as both society and the individual are concerned.

But of course children do need an outlet for their feelings. They need to be able to express their anxieties and hostilities and rebellion. And home can provide a safe and understanding place for giving vent to these feelings.

Developing tolerance

Minority-group parents have the additional responsibility of helping their children to develop a fundamental tolerance and compassion for their fellow man. These qualities serve as an antidote to the venom and bitterness that are likely to result from being the victims of a racist culture. Children need to be told, directly or indirectly, that not all people of the dominant group are necessarily prejudiced. There is nothing to be gained by giving boys and girls an impression that racial, religious, and nationality prejudices are inevitable. It can lead to a feeling of hopelessness and despair which is sometimes personally stultifying.

Children can be shown that there are many examples of unprejudiced behavior in our cul-

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By Betsey Barton

If your child is handicapped

The struggle for reality is hard; but
with help, children can win
the battle and find independence and satisfaction

Of the many difficult tasks required of parents, that of bringing up a crippled child is perhaps the most exacting. It demands much wisdom and judgment and patience. Above all, it demands an extraordinary amount of love. The stresses and strains are more subtle and devious than in the relationship between a normal child and his parents; the fears and needs are more exaggerated. But the basic situation is the same: To help their children become mature, loving, and productive adults is the goal of all parents whatever the abilities or the disabilities of the children may be.

I write as one who has not only seen these relationships in action from the outside but has also had direct experience with them. At the age of sixteen, I was struck down by a severe accident that resulted in a permanent physical disability and forced me and my parents to remake my life. I could not have done so without their constant tenderness and tact. After succeeding in my new life to some degree, I went into the rehabilitation field where I have worked with the disabled of all kinds and of all ages. I have worked with them in the gymnasium where they were trying to learn to walk. I have helped them learn to dress themselves and to eat alone. And I have talked with parents who stood anxiously by as their children struggled.

During my years of work I have come to the conclusion that the disabled child and his parents must pass through a discipline which is no different from that required of all human beings

in the course of their education but which is more tortuous because of the added burden of the handicap. The obstacle course, the intelligence test of life, is basically the same, it seems to me. All of us pass through it; some do well, some do badly, some fail altogether. The disabled sometimes do better than the nondisabled, perhaps because they are forced to consider it more carefully, and to concentrate their energies.

Briefly, the obstacle course seems to me to consist of four steps: to know reality; to accept reality; to learn to cope with reality; and finally, to bring one's own powers of creativity to bear on the reality that has been known, accepted, and coped with. Only when this last step has been taken can any control of reality be claimed. But these steps are, of course, not steps at all but part of a living process, part of the growth in awareness on the part of the parents and of the child. And it is a slow process of assimilation; reality cannot be accepted all at once.

Facing the facts

The heartbreak that the parents of disabled children feel as they face the facts with slow reluctance cannot be minimized. It makes the running of this obstacle course sometimes infinitely distressing but also rewarding in surprising ways.

Pearl Buck, mother of a mentally disabled child, describes her early feelings about the child in a lovely little book, *The Child Who*

Never Grew: ". . . There are basically two kinds of sorrows: those which can be assuaged and those which cannot be. . . . The crippling of one's child irremediably is an inescapable sorrow. It has to be lived with; and more than that, it has to be used for some sort of life other than that planned in health. . . . The despair into which I had sunk when I realized that nothing could be done for the child and that she would live on and on had become a morass into which I could easily have sunk into uselessness. . . . The sight of a neighbor's normal little daughter talking and doing the things my child could never do was enough to send me down. . . . The world is not shaped for the helpless. . . ."

Another famous woman writer, an intimate friend of mine, once wrote to me: "I often envy parents who solve everything pertaining to their children with the efficiency of a phrase, a precept, a rule, or a convention. . . . I think I told you I have a lame daughter. Osteomyelitis, when she was four (she is now twenty-one). She is very talented—gay, extroverted, wonderful. But every time I hear her footstep it falls on my heart. Yet of the four children this one, despite her long torture, is perhaps the best adjusted."

This kind of knowledge, and the honest admission of it, demands great courage from the parents. It takes patience and it takes time, particularly when a child is suddenly disabled or struck down. But to hide from the knowledge or to misrepresent it to oneself or to the child can be disastrous. Once the lie is discovered, the way back to trust is steep, sometimes impassable.

I myself was misled about the nature of my accident. My spine had been smashed, and all the doctors who saw me knew that I would never walk normally again. Yet it was not until ten years after my injury, when I went to work in veterans' hospitals with men who had the same disabilities, that I learned this. It is possible that I could not have accepted the knowledge immediately following my injury, but such a prolonged deception made my "readjustment" painful—spectacularly so, because it had been so long delayed.

Katharine Butler Hathaway, a victim of tu-

berculosis of the spine as a child, wrote later with bitterness in *The Little Locksmith* of her mother's failure to tell her the whole truth. Katharine did not rise from her bed until she was fifteen. Then, without preparation by either a doctor or her mother, she faced herself in the mirror for the first time. She was terrified at her appearance: she was stunted, she was never to grow any taller than a ten-year-old child. The longing for love and marriage and normal relationships lived in her to an immense degree. Yet through her mother's silence and Spartan smiles, she was led to believe that she was incapable of love of any kind, particularly sexual love. Thus, the young girl who had faced the reality of her deformity on one level came at last to accept false ramifications of it on other levels. She adjusted, indeed, to a lie.

From these experiences and from the vast number of disabled people I've talked with and the case histories I've studied, I have learned that knowledge of reality is of the utmost importance. Doctors and psychologists are constantly amazed at the ability of people to deal with the truth *once they know it*. And both parents of disabled children and the children themselves need help in knowing the truth. Often the buried hostility parents feel for their disabled children comes from a sense of shame which stems from ignorance. "What have I done to deserve a child like this?" is a question that may be answered by unconsciously punishing the child. When the mother of a spastic child is helped to see that it is not her fault that the child was injured at birth, she feels much lighter. The truth can make her free.

The father of a spastic boy, himself a hard-working, successful man, held the same high standards for his son and drove him unmercifully. "Of course I have always to succeed, always, always to be perfect!" the little boy finally cried out to the caseworker. "And I can't. Something makes me slow." The father did not realize that his boy had a brain injury, that he could not achieve the standards set for him. When the caseworker had helped the father to see these facts, his conduct changed. He became gentle with the boy and they began to enjoy companionship for the first time in their lives.

"My child is a spastic." "My child may never

walk normally." "My child's hand may always be paralyzed." These are the facts that parents must face. Yet it is the responsibility of the doctors and the caseworkers to help them accept these facts by slowly and sympathetically bringing them knowledge that is complete, for only complete knowledge can bring understanding.

Hope is important

Reality is accepted more easily in an atmosphere of hope. The changes in the whole field of rehabilitation have created opportunities for disabled children where none existed ten years ago. It is only within the last five years that the rehabilitation of cerebral-palsied children has been explored with any objectivity and science. Once they were all regarded as hopeless idiots. Now we know that many of them have extremely high I.Q.'s and that their palsy can often be retrained and given some semblance of coordination.

When I was first injured, no one with a broken back lived. When I remained alive, the doctors were nonplused. Anyone who suffers this accident now is expected not only to live but to go on and learn to take complete care of himself, to ambulate, to travel alone, to drive a car, and to hold a job in which he can be self-supporting. And all this has happened within the last ten years!

Thus, it seems to me that the acceptance of reality brings with it not a dull resignation but a hopeful acquiescence to the facts—facts that it may be possible to change eventually, or at least to alleviate. On the wall of Dr. George Deaver's office (he is physician in charge at the Bellevue Hospital rehabilitation center) there hangs a sign that reads something like this: "God grant me the courage to change what can be changed, to accept what cannot be changed, and the wisdom to know the difference."

Love and understanding

When both parents and children have tried to relate themselves to reality and then to accept it, the next step must be taken, that of learning to re-educate to it. The swiftness and ease with which this takes place depends on the atmosphere that surrounds the child at home—the love, the patience, the guidance and help.

"We've found that we cannot teach a child anything," says the head of the Vineland Training School, where cerebral-palsy children are housed and re-educated, "unless his mind and heart are free of unhappiness. The only child who can learn is the happy child."

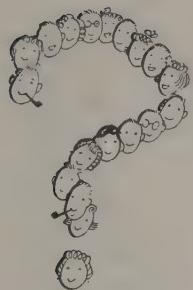
"Whatever else you do for a child, it is of no avail unless you love him," Frances Wickes, psychoanalyst, once said to me.

Love? Happiness? Are these two qualities so difficult to provide for the handicapped child? It would seem so. Unfortunately, the majority of parents are either disappointed in or ashamed of their child if he is born a cripple. If the family is poor, very often the mother is overworked and in a constant hurry. A handicapped child is an almost unbearable extra burden. In the homes of the rich and poor alike, the disabled child is often the victim of two extremes which are expressions of this buried anguish. Either the child is overprotected and pampered so he can do nothing for himself, or he is treated with undue harshness.

"The curse of Christ is on me," one young girl who had had polio told me. "It is only inferior people who get crippled like this. Only the ignorant." Shocked, I asked who had taught her this, and she replied that it had always been thought to be true in her home. A little boy told me that he seemed to be so much trouble to his parents that he wished they had acted "like Indian tribes and left me on the hills to die." "My father is embarrassed to go on the street with me," said a little Italian boy who had cerebral palsy, "so I walk behind him." And another boy, who also had cerebral palsy, said it took him so long to dress he often missed the school bus; and his mother used to swear at him when he was late. She would swear at him and then, overcome with remorse, sweep him up into her arms. "She hates me with her mouth," he said wonderingly, "but she loves me with her heart."

Such reactions may be the result of ignorance or disappointment or a combination of both. They are modified or cease when the parents are helped by therapists, caseworkers, and doctors to understand their child's disability. The parents' understanding is enormously im-

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Parents' questions

These questions are selected and discussed
by the Child Study Association
staff, and the answers written by its various members

We have a four-year-old adopted little girl and now, to our surprise and pleasure, I find I am pregnant! We haven't yet told Marilyn fully about her being a "chosen baby," and now that a little brother or sister is on the way it seems especially important. But what to tell her and how? Isn't she bound to feel a little inferior no matter how much we assure her that she is altogether ours and that the difference of birth does not make any difference at all in our love for her?

MRS. W.D.B.

You're wise not to delay telling Marilyn the full facts, because she is certain to learn them sometime or—what would be harder—vaguely suspect something. Experience proves this again and again. How much better for adopted children to hear the truth simply and with complete acceptance by parents at a time the parents choose. If possible this should be when a child is so young that he has not yet built up any other picture of his coming to his parents. But even so, a child needs to talk it all over many times, as his growing intelligence leads him to deeper questioning.

A happy, well-adjusted child with secure home relationships will of course deal with the knowledge that he is "different" more easily than one who has found growing up a difficult business. But it's safe to say that the knowledge of being adopted is always a hurdle, even for the best adjusted child in the world. Just how difficult it is differs in each case.

Marilyn, like every other adopted child, will need time to digest her knowledge. She may not show through direct words or questions

whatever distress or confusion she feels. Instead there may be some increase in behavior disturbances.

The prospect of a new baby who is a "borned" child needs explanation. Marilyn is sure to wonder just how she came into the world and into your life. She will need to hear that her first mother couldn't give her a home, and so you and your husband (her "real" parents) were full of joy when she came to be your little daughter. The new baby's coming and your explanations should help her understand the facts of birth as well as the special facts of her birth.

As her parents, you will have to be sensitive to what Marilyn is thinking and feeling. There are no stock phrases or answers. Each child needs help in a different way from any other.

With this kind of understanding you can avoid the pitfalls of the two extremes—on the one hand, the pretense that it isn't of the slightest importance to a child that she came to her parents differently from other children and, on the other, the assumption that the knowledge necessarily comes as a knockdown blow.

My son, Jerry, almost five, was left partially crippled by infantile paralysis at the age of three, and may always need to wear a brace. We knew we might be tempted to baby him, so we have tried to treat him as far as possible like his brothers, Bill (six) and George (eight). He has done well. We are proud of his ability to handle himself physically and to get along with children his own age. But we are trou-

bled by his whininess and his frequent outbursts of anger at us and his brothers. G.L.N.

How to avoid overprotecting a physically handicapped child without pushing him beyond his capacity is one of the most delicate and difficult jobs parents are called upon to do. A certain amount of gentle pressure is needed with all children in helping them to healthy growth; but perhaps Jerry is reacting to more than he can comfortably handle. The fact that he has made a good adjustment physically, and in his social relations with his peers, shows that you must have done a good job in many ways. But perhaps it isn't quite fair to treat him, as you say, exactly like his brothers, if by that you mean you have ignored his handicap and the extra effort that is required of him in so many areas. He makes this effort in order to please you, and to gratify his own need for accomplishment. But he needs the sense of recognition—the sense that his parents are appreciative of that extra effort he must make.

All children at times feel pulled in two directions. They want to grow up and be independent, and yet sometimes they wish for a little comforting and babying. And your Jerry is no exception. When you feel that he needs it, you can give him some of this comforting in such a way as not to keep him a baby and not to have him feel sorry for himself. Rather, it can give him the support that will help him to meet new situations more effectively.

My twin girls, now seven, who look exactly alike, are objecting to being dressed alike and sometimes say that they hate to be twins. Yet at other times they want to be treated just the same and don't want to be separated. I know the clothes aren't important; but I have dressed them the same in order to put a premium, as it were, on their being twins and to play up the fact that they were different from other children. MRS. L.F.M.

Having twins—and being twins—can be a confusing affair for parents and children. You know better than anyone that twins pose special problems, not just because there are two

children needing your care at the same time but because of the special emotional implications that grow out of their twinness.

Actually, your girls are showing you some of their conflicting feelings. Twins usually have a deep attachment to one another, especially identical twins as yours seem to be. They often feel much closer to one another than other siblings do; it is almost as if they were two parts of a larger personality—complementing each other and absorbed in one another to the exclusion of outsiders, even sometimes of their parents. And yet as they grow older they also feel the need to be personalities in their own right. In spite of their dependence on each other there is often undercover competitiveness, too. Being twins sets them apart as different from other children; being allowed to be different from one another establishes them as separate individuals like their friends.

For these reasons it is wise to help your twins discover their own separate selves. Let each choose her own clothes and develop her own taste. At times they may want different clothes; at others, they may want to look as much alike as they can. Encourage them to develop friendships independently of one another, and perhaps to choose different kinds of after-school activities as they get older. Schools that are coming to understand that twins may do better if they are not always in competitive situations, when possible are placing them in different grade sections.

You can guard against going to extremes in forcing your twins to be different on all occasions in all ways. You can take your cue from the girls themselves. Encourage and enjoy their special, individual qualities at the same time that you recognize their need for one another and their role together in the family group.

When my husband was called to the pastorate of a church in a well-to-do suburb, I was pleased that our children would be in a neighborhood in which they would have good schools and congenial friends. However, I am troubled to find that their schoolmates here do things and have things my children can't af-

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The reluctant reader



The causes of dislike

of reading, and some ways of handling it, as
seen by a librarian, an educator, and a psychiatrist

Many parents, and teachers too, complain that children today do not read, or do not like to read, as much as children did a generation ago. Is this true? And if so, what may be the causes of their lack of interest—or maybe lack of ability to read? To explore these questions the Children's Book Committee of the Child Study Association sponsored a panel-discussion meeting on November 27, 1950.

Various approaches to the problem were represented by the panel members: Margaret Scoggin, young people's specialist at the Nathan Straus Branch, New York Public Library; Roma Gans, professor of education, Teachers College, Columbia University; and Dr. Abraham A. Fabian, psychoanalyst. Josette Frank, of the staff of the Child Study Association, was the moderator.

In introducing the panel members, Miss Frank cited the deep concern of parents as shown in their troubled questions about children who don't read. In our reading civilization, we set great store upon the printed word. We feel that children must not only read but read fluently in order to keep up with the demands of their world, now and later. Yet many seem either uninterested or actually unable to master the necessary technique. Is it because of faulty teaching? Are there too many competing interests—radio, movies, television? Does the availability of picture books and comics reduce the incentive to read?

A librarian's point of view

Miss Scoggin, drawing on her experiences with groups in the library, protested against

labeling young people "reluctant readers" merely because they do not read the books we want them to read.

"Often young people don't read simply because no one has ever convinced them that there is a book interesting enough or readable enough to make it worth the effort to find. There are very few young people who don't read *something*—magazines or newspapers or comics perhaps. What they read on their own is our clue to the level of their reading ability and the things that interest them. Every youngster has an interest of some sort. It needs an adult who is painstaking and interested enough to find it, and to relate it to books."

"It isn't so surprising that young people refuse to read many of the books their parents used to read. Children are contemporary in their interests, and we have no right to scorn their preferences. Perhaps they are bored by the books that are required reading for school. The reading a youngster does because some interest of his own led him to a book, no matter what its literary style, is apt to be far more valuable than the reading to which he is driven. Many students associate all forms of reading with the few books they struggled through because they were required reading. We do have to require some reading, but can't we make the required lists broad enough for young people with varied interests to choose books which are also pleasurable?"

"Many of us seem to believe that if young people could only be dragged through the classics, some magic would turn them into better readers or better people and therefore the world

would be a better place. Magic does not lie in the classics. Magic takes place when the reader and the book meet at just the right instant. Young people who are dragged through the classics won't be turned into anything but reluctant readers."

Miss Scoggin offered several suggestions that she believed might reduce the number of reluctant readers: (1) that there should be somewhere, in the school, the public library, or the home, a large and varied selection of books—not confined to great literature or our own childhood favorites; (2) that young people should have access to that collection at any time—not just at stated times—and that the place should be comfortable; and (3) that the collection should be in charge of somebody interested in young people as individuals—not just as readers—who can give them casual, informal guidance, and who will not worry about whether or not they are reading all the time they are using the collection.

The role of the school

In presenting the school aspects of reading, Professor Gans enumerated three things she wished all parents and teachers would do.

"The first is *wait*. When children get off to a bad start in reading, a wholesome pause often prevents trouble and brings back serenity to both parent and child. Some youngsters aren't yet interested in reading—they are probably busy with other things.

"Second, inquire into motivation. What does this child want? Was he getting along all right before reading was introduced? The likelihood is that when he has a motive for learning to read, he will learn. Sometimes a classroom project can supply such a motive. An opportunity to handle picture books may create a taste and interest for reading. Sharing reading experiences with one another sometimes turns the trick—interest may be catching.

"Third, accept the child for whatever he is. Lots of people don't read. We penalize children when they don't read—we expect them to measure up to the standards we set, yet we do not apply these same standards to ourselves. Many of us don't like to read."

Professor Gans pointed out that reading fits

into the personality pattern. Some children need to spend more time by themselves. Such children read a lot more and different books than do the gregarious ones.

One frequent cause of a child's reading difficulties, Professor Gans said, is an interrupted beginning. The child whose early learning has been interrupted by illness, absence from school, or change of residence needs special help and a re-establishment of confidence in his ability to catch up. We need, also, to reconsider the value of drill as a teaching technique, giving the child a way to help him remember.

Emotional factors

Dr. Fabian then discussed some emotional problems in reading difficulties. We need to differentiate, he said, between the child who is unwilling to read or is not yet ready, or who has some organic difficulty, and the child in whom inability to read is a symptom of deeper trouble. We must expect that children who have not the necessary intelligence will not learn to read, since reading is a complex task. Certain organic factors, too, are involved in reading: the eyes, the ears, the brain, and the nervous system. Reading clinics are inclined to stress eye difficulties in accounting for reading problems. But many tests have proved that eye defects seldom interfere with learning to read. Similarly, deafness is a rare cause. Another popular theory, that right- or left-handedness influences learning to read, has not been proved.

"In clinical studies of children, the large majority of those with reading difficulties are boys. Why this is so has been the subject of a good deal of speculation. From a dynamic point of view one might speculate along these lines: Freud has said that in order to be educated a child has to settle down. The idea that children should be six years old before they start school is not accidental. That is the time they do settle down a bit. Apparently girls reach this stage earlier and easier than boys do. Learning to read requires this kind of settling down.

"Missing out on the fundamentals of reading, as Professor Gans pointed out, is one easily recognized cause of reading difficulties in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades," Dr. Fabian said. "Refusal to learn may also be a child's

weapon of retaliation against parents—especially parents whose standards of reading and education are high.

"Our tendency is to do nothing about these children, on the theory that sooner or later they will learn. However, since reading is necessary for all further educational advance, a handicap in this area means that the total educational program bogs down. Furthermore, by the time the reading difficulty is well-established there are other problems resulting from it. The child who feels inadequate develops emotional reactions to his inadequacy. Even when the reading difficulties as such are outgrown, they must still be recognized as a symptom behind which may lie factors which will ultimately evidence themselves in other areas of the personality. The search for the cause should go on.

"There are a few children whose reading disabilities are due to organic problems—eye difficulties, etc. In the vast majority, the problems that precipitate reading difficulties are emotional in origin. Were you to examine these children, you would find that for the most part they are children with emotional difficulties."

Other pertinent questions

In the discussion, several questions were raised. Might the parents' overanxiety about the child's reading create a hostile attitude toward reading? Dr. Fabian agreed that this is not uncommon. The parents' implication that the school has failed to educate the child, since he has not learned to read, suggests their own hostility and further deepens the child's problem in relation to school and learning. Professor Gans called attention to the cultural implication: the status of the family seems to be threatened by the child who is not reading. Parents expect their child to measure up to a norm, and reading ability becomes a symbol of this norm. The idea that a child must read at a certain age is deeply rooted in our culture.

A member of the audience declared her belief that the world would be made a better place if most of us read more. She questioned critically the complacent acceptance of non-reading, and asked for greater insistence that children read. Panel members disclaimed complacency, but suggested that what the individ-

ual does with what he reads should be of greater concern than just getting people to read. For example, a child may use his reading as withdrawal from the world, rather than as constructive approach to its problems.

What do we know about the impact of books, their effect on children's ideas? The panel doubted that children's ideas are as much derived from what they read as from their families, their mores, and things they have been taught. It would be difficult, in any study, to separate all the subtle effects of reading, yet perhaps we might study the cumulative effects of repetition of certain cultural patterns—in reading, movies, radio and television.

Radio and television were seen as supplementing, rather than competing with reading. Libraries report that book circulation was not reduced by radio. We cannot assume, either, that reading is the only established medium of communication, or the only one from which the child learns anything worth-while. We need to consider all of the media of communication as being valid means of information, education, and culture, no matter what negative aspects they may also have.

To the question whether modern methods of teaching have led to an increase or decrease of non-readers, Professor Gans replied that while no statistical study is available, a good modern school program, with its greater concern for the individual child, should reduce the number of non-readers—though the beginning of reading may be slower. Dr. Fabian added that no matter what methods were used, about ten per cent of children in the first few grades would not become readers. It is erroneous, he maintained, to ascribe all reading failures to teaching methods. The child comes to school with a well-defined personality, one of the attributes of which is his attitude toward learning anything. Perhaps a fair marriage between some of the traditional teaching and timing and those of the progressive schools might prevent those failures that are due to physiological causes.

The discussion closed with a suggestion that perhaps we may find it wise to re-examine our standards of what we expect children to read.

MRS. HUGH GRANT STRAUS
For the Children's Book Committee

A letter sent to parents in one town
will help others to understand

What to do about air raid drills

The editors of CHILD STUDY have planned to devote an early issue of the magazine to a discussion of family stability in an unstable world. Meanwhile, however, readers will undoubtedly be interested in the following letter from the vice-president and treasurer of the Child Study Association of America, who is also vice-president of the Public Education Association.

Dear Editor:

Thoughtful parents and teachers have become increasingly concerned about the way in which air raid drills have been handled in the schools. Because of my well-known interest and participation in school affairs for many years, not long after such drills were started in the New York City schools, a number of parents consulted me in the hope that a way could be found to prevent raising anxiety in children and their parents by reason of such drills. I at once took up the matter with the superintendent of schools and the Board of Education of the New York City school system. And they were most cooperative.

I also discussed the situation with a member of the Board of Education of Great Neck, Long Island. The following letter resulted. I am sending a copy to you in the hope that you will be interested in publishing it. It should not only reassure and help the parents who read CHILD STUDY, but may well serve as a pattern for use in other communities.

FRANK E. KARELSEN, JR.

TO: Parents of Great Neck Students
RE: Air Raid Drills in the Schools

Acting upon directives from the State Education Department and the State Civil Defense Commission, we have instituted a system of air raid drills in our schools.

Many of you, as well as many of us, may de-

bate within ourselves as to whether or not this is a wise step to have taken. Nevertheless, it seems we have no choice in the matter. We are living in troublous times and cannot leave undone any precautionary measures that are advised by those in authority.

Although we hope we will not have fires within our schools, we take every precautionary measure possible in the event that such a contingency might arise. Part of that precautionary measure is to accustom the children to march quietly and promptly to places of safety outside of the building. We can agree that this procedure is wise. We also know that with repeated practice, children participate in these fire drills with little or no anxiety.

Likewise with air raid drills, the children learn with repeated practice to march quietly and promptly to the designated places of greatest safety. These drills are conducted with the same matter-of-fact attitude as the fire drills. They are something that is done because it is sensible to do so. The teachers and building principals have been instructed to treat these drills in this fashion.

Children will usually respond to the tone set by the adults who are responsible for them. If teachers and parents can accept the drills as a necessary routine for the present, even though they may not agree with the practice, they will help the children accept them and feel safer because they know the adults have planned to take as good care of them as possible.

During the last war it was learned that young children suffered less emotional harm by remaining with their parents whenever possible, and secondly with well-known teachers in evacuation centers, than they did by being sent away to live with strangers in safe communities.

This is being pointed out to illustrate how

much strength and confidence children gain from adults they know and trust. If, then, parents and teachers alike can maintain calmness and transmit a feeling of assuredness in the steps that seem necessary for us to take, the children will react with a minimum of tension and anxiety.

It always helps to talk about worries. It will help the children to let them talk about the drills they have in school if they want to talk about them. It might also help if in your family you plan together the safest place for all of you to go in the event of a bombing signal. Action, and plans for action, make for release of tension and a greater feeling of safety.

The entire civil defense program for the schools and the community is in the planning stage. Additional bulletins will be sent to you from time to time as further information is ready or may seem helpful.

KATHERINE E. D'EVELYN
Chief School Psychologist
MARION E. WILES
Civil Defense Coordinator
JOHN L. MILLER
Superintendent of Schools

Changing ways with children

What real gains
have we made



The next issue of *Child Study* will report the Annual Conference of the Child Study Association. If you were unable to attend the Conference, you will want to take advantage of this opportunity to share in the proceedings. If you were present, you will want to have this permanent record of the contributions of the eminent speakers who participated in the program on February 19.

Three Basic Books For Parents

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By GRANTLY DICK READ, M.A., M.D. Let this famous book, which has helped thousands of expectant mothers, show you how you can make the birth of your child the natural, easy experience nature intended it to be. Written in straightforward, non-technical language and filled with case histories that show how Dr. Read's theory works in actual practice. \$2.75

INFANT AND CHILD IN THE CULTURE OF TODAY

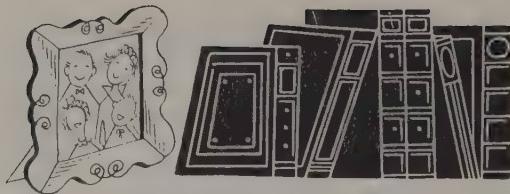
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Book reviews

Our Rejected Children.

By Albert Deutsch. Foreword by Austin MacCormick.

Boston: Little, Brown, 1950. 314 pp. \$3.00.

Our Rejected Children was actually started several years ago when Albert Deutsch set out to visit state training schools for juvenile delinquents from one end of the country to the other. He tells a shocking story of what he saw—of dilapidated quarters, of untrained and underpaid staffs, of rigid discipline and punishment so severe that children have occasionally died from it. Not all the institutions he visited were bad. Some are doing an excellent job; others have improved as the result of the publication of some of these findings in newspaper and magazine articles—but not nearly enough. It costs money to provide decent living quarters; humane and informed directors; psychiatrists, psychologists, and trained personnel to help young inmates.

What can we do to transform our correctional institutions into genuine rehabilitation centers, Mr. Deutsch asks. He answers his question with twelve recommendations for improvement—better personnel, greater concern for children's needs, abolition of corporal punishment, decent meals, less monotonous regimentation, more homelike atmosphere, better educational opportunities, psychiatric consultation, smaller size to make individualized treatment possible, federal grants for training personnel, placement of reform schools for children under the direction of state child welfare agencies, and the active support of large numbers of citizens. "The good will of enlightened citizens must be mobilized behind adequate

budgets, sound legislation, and improved school programs."

In the second half of his book Mr. Deutsch asks who's to blame for delinquency and inquires into the backgrounds of these children in trouble. The final chapter, on "Our Crime-Breeding Culture," states the author's thesis: "It is a common tendency to focus attention on the local factors, the home, the school, the social agencies, the policemen, the courts, the correctional institutions, the church or housing and other neighborhood living conditions. All these are important and sometimes decisive factors in delinquency and its control. But too often we overlook the forces that transcend the local community—the forces in our over-all cultural pattern itself. Ours is a crime-centered culture." Adjusting children to society is not enough. "We must think in terms of a better society."

MARY E. BUCHANAN

The Handicapped Child.

By Edith M. Stern with Elsa Castendyck.

New York: A. A. Wyn, 1950. 179 pp. \$2.00.

In spite of the increasing awareness of the needs of the handicapped child in these last years, not nearly enough attention has been given to the problems of his family—the parents who live daily with the strain of his disability, the sisters and brothers who must cope with his difference from other children. In *The Handicapped Child*, Edith M. Stern and Elsa Castendyck meet sympathetically the difficulties of such families. With honesty and directness, the authors discuss the pain and bewilderment, the feelings of guilt and defeat, which so often attack the parents who must accept the fact that their child will be "different"—limited in function of mind or body.

The first chapter, "Your Handicapped Child and You," examines these feelings and some of their inevitable consequences. Engulfed by pity, guilt, concern for the disabled child, parents often lean toward extremes in their relationships with him: they enfold the child in a mantle of overprotectiveness and indulgence, to the detriment of other family needs; or they become irritable and demanding in their determination

to minimize the difficulty and to bring the child up to par at all costs. The authors point out how understandable such feelings are, in the face of the parental burden. Throughout their book, they offer parents help in understanding the meanings of these feelings and in developing constructive attitudes based on real acceptance of their child's limitations.

Nowhere does the book give false reassurances or offer easy solutions. With good comprehension of the depth and complexity of family feeling, community attitudes, school problems, and of the drain on both financial and emotional resources of parents, the authors explore the problem of giving the handicapped child what he needs more poignantly than does even the normal child: a basic feeling of being loved and accepted, wanted and needed, no matter how limited his mental or physical functioning.

The book offers chapters such as "If Your Child Is Crippled," or has cerebral palsy, epilepsy, a speech handicap, blindness or partial sight, deafness, mental retardation, or rheumatic fever. The authors discuss the special needs that result from these handicaps and suggest methods of meeting them at home or in school. They touch upon placement of the disabled child and list sources of help where parents can get medical and other information about opportunities for the atypical child. They stress the necessity for treating the child not in terms of his disability, but like any normal youngster with special needs.

It is important to remember, as the authors point out in their foreword, that *The Handicapped Child* is a guide to sound family attitudes toward such youngsters and not a manual on daily care and management. In view of this emphasis on good mental hygiene in the home, however, we might have looked for a more complete bibliography on parent education and family relations as an additional source of help. The books listed are too few. But this is a small lack compared to the real contribution this book will make to every parent who is looking for help with the child who, in learning to live with his handicap, needs all the understanding and encouragement the family and the community can give him.

MARY K. JONES



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Midcentury conference

Continued from page 2

assigned to the various work groups, where their presence and their straight thinking were salutary challenges to the clichés of older conferees. Observers from many countries watched and listened with intense interest.

The final, hard-fought, day-long plenary session was a working model of a democratic "town meeting." It dealt with many matters, some highly controversial, including problems of religious education and racial segregation. Out of all this it presented to the people of this country an impressive Magna Charta for children and youth. Many of its recommendations will be years in coming to fulfillment, but their enunciation under these auspices is a landmark in progress. What the delegates carried home from their eye-opening contact with widely assorted fellow countrymen will surely take root in their own communities. This process will be aided by the strong follow-up machinery that has already been set in motion to carry the Conference recommendations back to local groups and to find ways of implementing them.

Whatever the handicaps and difficulties in securing adequate skilled services for children in the years ahead, we now have goals to reach for. Those who attended the Conference went home feeling heartened and rededicated.

THE EDITORS

"Few of us can make any real headway in human society until we learn to get on with others very different from ourselves. And by getting on with such people I do not mean acting a part in terms of coldly formal politeness but tolerating them with good humor based on an open recognition of what we dislike in them, disagreeing with them and crossing swords with them on various matters and yet maintaining a friendship and respect which may sometimes arise because of, and not in spite of, our recognized and accepted differences."

From *That Dear Octopus—the Family*
by David R. Mace

A new publication of the
Child Study Association of America

Children and prejudice

Continued from page 11

ture, and that there are many individuals who are either unprejudiced or are striving to overcome their prejudices. It is important that these illustrations do not go beyond the bounds of reality into the realm of sentimental, wishful thinking. A most effective and realistic way of presenting this point of view is seen when the parents have friends and acquaintances among individuals of different racial, religious, and nationality groups.

Parents who initiate, emphasize, and participate in discussions of outstanding achievements of members of various minority groups also help their children. When kept in perspective, these discussions serve as a stimulant to the children; when exaggerated, they create the impression that these individuals are freaks, or that their accomplishments indicate some special virtue of minority-group members. The purpose of using such examples is to reinforce self-esteem and raise aspirations, not to foster an empty minority-group chauvinism.

How parents feel

Before parents can offer their children solid protection against the potential ravages of the racist disease, they themselves must have a firm core of human values and a strong social morality. These characteristics guide parents' perspective and actions in their relations with other human beings. It is not enough that parents put ideals into words. Children seem to be more sensitive to social and psychological realities than to mere words. They won't believe what their parents say about minority status unless the parents themselves believe it and act on it. If parents are unsure, escapist, defensive, ambivalent, and full of conflict, their feelings will be communicated to their children. Because of his acceptance of these unstabilizing patterns from his parents, a child may be unable to withstand the negative pressures of a rejecting larger culture. He will then be unable to contribute to the attainment of a more democratic society.

Of course it is sometimes difficult for parents to overcome the effects of social rejection on

their own personalities. They themselves are the victims of the same forces from which they seek to protect their youngsters. Many of them still suffer from the impact of segregation and discrimination. Only when they can accept their own intrinsic value without the anxieties and self-doubt caused by prejudice can they help their children to do so.

But more is needed

The 1948-1949 *Directory of Agencies in Intergroup Relations*, published by the American Council on Race Relations, lists 385 agencies with 749 branches which are attempting to promote better intergroup relations among children, youth, and adults. The imposing array of agencies and programs in this field makes even more noticeable a significant omission: There is no agency or program concerned primarily or directly with helping children of minority groups avoid the detrimental effects of prejudice, discrimination, and segregation on their personalities. On the whole, this problem has been generally ignored.

It is not enough to state that any program designed to develop positive personality characteristics in children in general is at the same time adequate for minority-group children. It is in the nature of rejected minority status, and the essence of discrimination, that the persons stigmatized do not usually derive equal or adequate benefits from the constructive programs and institutions of the larger culture of which they are a part. They are generally excluded from many of the important positive social programs, limited in the degree of participation, or assigned to segregated units of activity.

It is only recently that the relationship between personality structure and function and larger social and economic factors have been recognized as an important area of research and action. In addition, the programs and policies of agencies in the field of intergroup relations are largely determined by individuals, of both the dominant and the minority groups, in the upper and upper-middle economic and educational levels. There is evidence to suggest that one of the psychological reactions of upper-

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class and upper-middle-class Jews, Negroes, and other minority peoples to the reality of prejudice and discrimination against their group is to deny, actively or passively, that these manifestations of social pathology are significantly harmful to healthy personality development. These persons seek to interpret personality distortions in fellow minority-group members as manifestations of the personal inadequacies of these individuals, or as objectionable characteristics of the lower-class minority-group members.

There have been many indications of gains made by minority groups in their struggle for full recognition and equal rights as American citizens. Gains have come through improvement of their living conditions. Progress has been made through programs designed to break down segregation and discrimination in housing, employment, education, and other facilities of government. There is no doubt that such an approach is important. In many ways it has shown its effectiveness.

But still there is need for a specific program designed to help children of minority groups withstand an oppressive racist society. It would be a mistake to argue that such a program is inherently passive, or that it deals with the symptoms of a social pathology rather than the fundamental causes. Such arguments underestimate the basic importance of the human personality. Fundamental social changes, brought about through democratic procedures, are the result of the efforts of large enough numbers of human beings with strength, stability, and integrity. Helping children to maintain a healthy and wholesome personality in the face of existing social pathology would seem to be, therefore, an essential factor in the struggle against social injustices. It is now that children are most vulnerable; the hoped-for changes of the future might be too late.

There is little evidence that the schools, churches, and other institutions and agencies are doing an effective job in this respect. The responsibility, therefore, rests on the parents to try to protect these children from the potential harm of a society that humiliates and rejects them.

In a brief prepared by the Attorney Gen-

eral's office and presented to the Supreme Court in the case of *Henderson v. the United States of America, Interstate Commerce Commission, and Southern Railway Company*, it was stated: "The effects of the segregation to which Negroes are subjected are not confined to those who are colored. They extend also to those who are white, and they bear vitally upon the interests of the nation as a whole."

If minority-group parents are able to face and assume their responsibilities to their children, they will not only help their own children to acquire "the mental, emotional, and spiritual qualities essential to individual happiness and responsible citizenship," but by virtue of this fact they will also contribute substantially to the development of an America stable enough to assure protection for all children.

The freedom to be different

Continued from page 5

The thin child may have the racehorse type of build, small bones, streamlined, and may be perfectly healthy though thin. Overweight may be due partly to body build or, as suggested above, to a temporary stage in growth and development.

Girls who wear glasses

Ellen, aged nine, had new eyeglasses. She found a place to hide them on the way to school, and for weeks did not wear them.

Eyeglasses, hearing aids, tooth braces seem to be a special set of potential worriers. And this is not confined to children. Many an adult would be more comfortable and more efficient with a hearing aid, for example, but will not wear one. Dorothy Parker's quip, untrue as it is, has become a cliché: "Men seldom make passes at girls who wear glasses." Whether adults' reluctance to wear such aids is due to pride, to fear that physical defects will make it difficult for them to get jobs, or to fear that they will be unloved and unwanted, their attitude is passed on to the Ellens.

When she was ten years old, Linda too had to start to wear glasses. Linda's mother was distressed. In Linda's hearing, the mother

sought sympathy from her friends. Wasn't it a pity that the attractive girl had to hide her pretty eyes behind thick lenses? Did her friends think Linda would still be popular? When guests came to the house, Linda's mother usually asked the girl, "Why don't you take off your glasses, dear? You're so much prettier without them." Naturally, Linda became self-conscious about her glasses. Most of the time she didn't wear them. As a result, she passed friends on the street without speaking because she couldn't see them; in her effort to see, she acquired a squint that was much more unbecoming than her glasses. She became shy and retiring and self-effacing.

Mary, however, had a happier experience. Her mother—who was just as disappointed as Linda's—was able to explain, and to believe, that people would notice the girl's glasses only as much as Mary herself did. Mary's mother helped Mary select frames to suit the shape of her face. The mother suggested that Mary do her hair in a more attractive way and, when she had a date, wear a flower in her blond

curls. She also suggested novel lapel gadgets to draw other people's eyes away from the glasses—at least until Mary herself could become accustomed to them. Before long, Mary forgot that she was wearing glasses, and others did, too.

Some of the stigma of glasses has disappeared as the available frames have become more attractive. Indeed, many girls who have no sight difficulty wear dark glasses for their modishness. An adolescent girl can select her own frames, perhaps with a friend to help her decide which are the most becoming. To be sure, a girl may choose frames that her parents consider positively horrible; but they will satisfy the wearer if they are in the current style of her group. Adolescents can learn to like to be different, but they want to be different together. Sweaters, shoes, eyeglasses all come under the need to conform—even in differences.

The slow in tempo

*Johnny packed a sack of food and ran away.
He was gone for some hours. Found riding*

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the subway, he said nobody wanted him at home.

Johnny was having his struggles at school. His older brother, Bob, had blazed a trail of glory three years ahead of him. Johnny, though as bright as his brother, was slower paced. He learned things thoroughly, but he took more time over them. Why couldn't he do as well as Bob, asked their father. Unfortunately, the father thought that comparisons would improve Johnny's work. Instead, Johnny despaired of ever being able to please his parents. Johnny decided that he must have been a foundling to be so different and so unsatisfactory. He decided to run away from it all. Johnny suffered from two common home situations: the difference in tempo and temperament of children who are equally bright, and the problem of being compared unfavorably with a brother or sister.

Tempo, pace, speed of reaction are part of an individual's make-up as truly as the color of his eyes and hair. In a world increasingly marked by speed and vanishing distances, the slow-moving person is often misjudged. His speedier brothers and sisters sometimes give a superficial impression of being smarter. Teachers often express impatience with children who move and do things more deliberately than others, yet some of them may be fine stabilizers for a group that could be hyperactive and speedy. Granted it is hard for a mother who has to get three children ready to leave the house at the same time. But she can learn to start the slower one earlier. Teachers, too, who know how to organize a classroom for individual work, come to value the thoroughness and depth of the deliberate pace of those boys and girls who go about their work more slowly.

Comparisons, especially those made by beloved parents, are hard on children. Suppose Johnny is not only slower-paced but actually has a lower I.Q. than his brother. Goading him to try to be like his brother not only seldom makes him so, but will frequently discourage him and impede the use of his full abilities. If Johnny always sees before him a goal he cannot reach, if what he produces with his best effort is never good enough, then he can come to be-

lieve in his heart that he does not belong and is not accepted as a person.

It is usually possible to "accentuate the positive." Now that Johnny has shown how he feels, his father would be wise to find the things Johnny does well, to share them, to express appreciation of them. Occasional use of the lime-light for Johnny when he has an honest accomplishment will go a long way to establish his confidence in himself. If Johnny makes the school basketball team, he'll feel that he really rates when Dad attends the games; if he earns a place on the Boy Scout band, even without missing a beat he'll note his parents standing proudly on the curb as the band goes marching by; if he makes a fine, garish finger painting, he'll be grateful when Mother sticks it on the kitchen wall for all to see.

Basic principles

There are, of course, many more ways in which children can be different. But the fundamental principles of parents' facing of them, and helping children to cope with them, remains the same. Parents can help if they:

1. honestly accept the fact that each person is a unique human being with his own interests and capacities, strengths and weaknesses, pace and temperament;
2. do not expect a child to be like brother, sister, uncle, grandparent—or parent;
3. enjoy his developing personality;
4. avoid and help others to avoid hurtful comments about variations in growth and development;
5. give boys and girls factual information and discuss with them what to expect in growth and development;
6. help the child who cannot attain his hopes and expectations to find other satisfactions, and give him genuine support and approval for these;
7. avoid unfavorable comments about other youngsters—and adults—who are different;
8. expect of each child only that of which he is capable and set goals that are right for him, his abilities and interests; and, most important of all,
9. make home the place where each child knows he is loved and accepted as he is.

How different?

Continued from page 8

individual interests. Isobel takes music lessons while the other girls go to the movies; she practices while others gab in a friend's house.

But Isobel's problem arises not only, if at all, from the time taken out of play by her musical interests; it arises because a concern with music, regarded in the group as too high-brow, goes beyond the limits of marginal differentiation in her circle. Gradually, without her full awareness of what is happening, Isobel is labeled as "different" (that is, as *too* different); and in the ceaseless game of friendship-ratings that the other girls play, she is left near the bottom or put to one side.

Meanwhile Isobel has become devoted to her music teacher, who encourages her to go on with music as a career; but Isobel's parents and schoolteacher—and Isobel herself—become worried that she may diverge from the path of a "normal" girl. (Some years ago, when I did a series of interviews on teen-agers' musical tastes, one mother of a fourteen-year-old told me, "My son is very musical, but I don't let him practice much because I want to keep him a normal boy.") Isobel's mother may even feel guilty that she has allowed Isobel's musical interests to develop to this point.

What are some of the alternatives that may be open to Isobel's mother in this situation? Certainly, I do not expect her to make decisions that will press Isobel toward martyrdom to some once-existent ideal. But I think that Isobel's mother and teacher might be making a mistake if they concluded that acceptance in the group was more important for Isobel than music. For one thing, it is easy for parents and children to believe that they want mere acceptance, whereas what they really crave is popularity going far beyond acceptance. (This confusion is all the easier to make because of the clique structure of many school classes where, indeed, there may be no midpoint between popularity and ostracism.)

But the real question is whether popularity or even acceptance is a goal worth the sacrifice of precious, genuine musical talent. What the group offers is attractive but precarious and

evanescent; music is a delight and an endless resource. In due time Isobel will be old enough to journey to an environment where there will be other girls and boys who care more passionately about music than about anything else—perhaps even than about *anybody* else. While our society has done an extraordinary job in the cultivation of the social skills, these must never be allowed to become ultimates of existence; they are far from being the only skills from which people can derive pleasure and profit. Some social skills Isobel will have to learn as part of her musical training, but this can wait.

The ability to wait

And, indeed, it really is the ability to wait that is involved here. Parents never ask themselves what will give their child (or themselves, for that matter) pleasure at the age of sixty or seventy. While our life-expectancy has lengthened, our life-timetables have shortened considerably; and our flattened perspective makes it hard for us to see our children suffer, even for a short time, let alone to be the cause of this suffering ourselves. Yet thousands of parents throw away their children's special gifts—which can best be cultivated during youth—in return for gifts of social adjustment to a particular group at a particular time and place. Though certainly an unhappy childhood is not desirable, it is true that many unhappy children do grow up to be happy, productive, befriended adults.

For Isobel's mother to make such a choice as to let her daughter suffer now in anticipation of her future satisfactions would require that she herself believe that music, no matter what its momentarily estranging qualities may be, is worth a child's devotion. She is likely to doubt

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this, despite the evidence of her own child's attachment, if she herself is other-directed. If her own reactions and values are largely influenced by the opinions and values of relatives, friends, and neighbors, she will look to the other children for cues as to what is "normal" adjustment.

How then can she defend Isobel against the others, if they are taken as the norm? Indeed, she is likely to fail to defend Isobel if she cares too much whether Isobel likes her, for there will be times when Isobel will deeply resent her mother for permitting her to be "different," even if Isobel herself, pushed by her gifts and her music teacher, takes the first steps in this direction. Isobel's mother has some power to define the values in the home in such a way that a child's loneliness is not regarded as the worst possible fate, while a failure to develop potentialities is felt as a real tragedy. Thus, gradually Isobel may learn to defend herself against the expectations of any particular group, and can move away from other-direction toward genuine autonomy—toward the ideal, which we humans seek but never fully achieve, of cultivation of our genuine differences as these develop from our unique capacities and life experiences.

Furthermore, Isobel's parents are not only members of a particular family but members of a particular community. If they want to protect Isobel's future they are not entirely confined to giving her marginal guidance in the direction of marginal differentiation. As members of a P.T.A., for instance, they can insist that schools concern themselves not only with children's social adjustment, with forming them into tolerant, amiable members of a cooperating group, but with children's skills, musical, linguistic, mathematical, or whatnot. They can raise the question whether we may not have gone too far in de-emphasizing academic performance, thus concentrating the teachers' as well as the children's attention on the more intangible aspects of social development. And as members of the wider community, they can apply their efforts to increasing the appreciation of what people can do, even if this means decreasing the appreciation of "personality" as the chief focus of concern.

The handicapped child

Continued from page 14

plemented by attendance at a rehabilitation center such as the Institute for the Crippled and Disabled, and the Bellevue Hospital Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, in New York; and the Vineland Training School, in Vineland, N. J. Such centers are few and far between, but news of their successes is spreading. It is to be hoped that one day they will exist in all our large cities.

It is my belief that all parents of handicapped children, as well as the children themselves, need expert help. It is too difficult a journey to make alone. The relief parents feel when they understand what has happened to their children is great. "I didn't know," "I didn't realize," "I didn't understand," they say over and over to the psychiatrists or to the caseworkers. "It is so good to talk this over with someone," one mother said. "I have always been afraid of psychiatry—but this is just like having a visit with a wise friend!" Parents can also talk with these trained people about their own inevitable suffering over the child and be brought to feel that it is *all right* not to be Spartan all the time but that recognizing their emotions has a healing effect.

New hope through training

At such a place as the Institute where group therapy is practiced, both parents and children get an immediate chance to evaluate the handicap in relation to other handicapped children. This makes the reality easier to accept. Handicapped children are often much alone, and they are inclined to feel lonelier if they believe they are unique. At the Institute this sense of solitariness is lifted. The children realize that others have gone this way before them; they are not alone. They see that there are other disabilities that are worse than their own. They learn also that much can be done by hard work in learning to overcome their handicaps.

In exploring the possibilities of life within the limitations of a disability, new hope is provided by training. For this much good professional judgment is needed. Physiotherapists realize that failures can be devastating to the

handicapped, for very often they feel inferior and value themselves so little. At a place like the Institute, tasks and exercises are carefully graded by physiotherapists and doctors and caseworkers in accordance with the strength and capabilities of the handicapped child. As rehabilitation itself advances, the children do not drive themselves too hard, nor do the parents expect too much of them. Muscle tests, gymnastics, independence in daily activities are all becoming a matter of scientific computation instead of depending on chance or on individual determination.

Very often, when rehabilitation work first begins, the parents discover that it is hard for them to allow the child to learn independence; they had kept the child more dependent than they realized, and these new procedures seem to be taking the child away. I have seen a doctor scold a mother harshly when she ran to pick up her little girl who had fallen while trying to learn to balance in braces and crutches. "The child must learn to fall and get up alone," he said. "You are preventing her from learning by picking her up. Now, stand back. If you won't do as I ask, please don't bring your child for help again." In pain and fear then, the mother had to watch her little girl struggle and fall, struggle and fall again, without rushing to her aid.

Another mother, whose son was a spastic, protested to the therapist that she was "losing her boy" because he had gone to the movies alone one afternoon when encouraged by the case-

worker to try more things alone. One boy, a spastic of fifteen, was furiously angry with his mother when he learned how many things she had prevented him from learning when he was younger. "I've wasted years, years," he shouted at her, "letting you wait on me!" And doctors in rehabilitation beg parents to please bring such rehabilitation to their crippled children, even if it means letting ordinary schooling go for a few years.

Freedom through independence

It is marvelous to witness the understanding that comes to disabled children as they try out their independence. They realize, often before their parents, that independence has two sides. On one hand, it means giving up special rights and privileges, but it also means demanding the right to help oneself.

When Katharine Butler Hathaway went into her room and locked the door in order to teach herself to write, her mother hung around the door at first, waiting until Katharine finished her daily stint and came out. It was with a growing sense of despair that Katharine opened the door each day and saw her mother's loving, anxious face peering at her.

"Why do you do it?" Katharine finally burst out. "Why do you insist on waiting for me? Don't you see I am looking for a way to get some independence?"

"But, darling," her mother replied, flinging her arms around the girl, "I only want to help

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**CHILD STUDY ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
132 East 74th Street, New York 21, N. Y.**

you. I only want to make you happy."

"Mother," Katharine said fiercely; "I don't want you to *make* me happy."

Happiness would come to her, she knew, when she had earned it, when she had found her own way. And much independence can now be earned by handicapped children, much can be achieved by them. They can be trained eventually to hold excellent jobs that are as well paid as those of normal persons. They can, in some instances, find themselves as creative artists. Some of our greatest painting, poetry, and literature have come from crippled people.

Yet the victories that the majority of handicapped children win, although heroic, are not always as great as the dreams their parents had for them. It is hard for parents to reconcile themselves to exactly what their children can ultimately achieve. It is a laboriously slow process, requiring patience and humor and love. The daughter who, her parents were sure, would learn to be a ballet dancer must learn to walk in heavy double leg braces. The child who was pronounced by his nurse to be the prettiest and brightest baby she had ever seen never learns to talk easily because he was born deaf. The son who would one day take over the family business can only manage to learn to operate an elevator. The pretty girl, whose golden hair and blue eyes had made strangers stop her carriage and admire her, will always work at folding paper wrappings in a sheltered workshop. And always the parents must stand by while the struggle to cope with reality goes on, as it does in all families, sometimes hopefully, sometimes in bleak disappointment.

"It does seem," the father of a cerebral-palsied boy remarked wistfully to the head of Vineland one day, "that if my boy can learn to use the milking machine in the dairy he could learn to do something better."

"But there is nothing better for him, don't you see?" the head answered him out of the great wisdom of his experience. "The best thing in the world for each of us is that which we can best do, because it gives us a feeling of being useful. That's happiness."

The final incident in this article and the quotation on page 13 are taken from *The Child Who Never Grew*, by Pearl S. Buck, by permission of the John Day Company.

Parents' questions

Continued from page 16

ford. My twelve-year-old daughter is becoming painfully aware that her clothes don't meet their standards, and even my boy, who is ten, doesn't want a birthday party this year because it can't be on a scale that the neighborhood children expect. What do you suggest that I do about this?

MRS. V.L.

Children do need help in meeting this kind of challenge. It is natural for ten- and twelve-year-olds to want to do things as their contemporaries do. Sooner or later, all of us have to learn to cope with similar situations, and we can't entirely shield our children from them. It's a matter of balancing values ourselves and then helping the children to balance their own values.

Certain of the neighborhood "standards" may not be so hard to meet. You can probably help your daughter choose her clothes more wisely; you can help your son arrange a party that, though not sumptuous, will at least be original and noteworthy in other ways. If you are happy to work on the problem with them, they may take pride in these accomplishments, even if they aren't just what the others do. Your home and your husband's respected position in the community surely have something special to which your children can look with pride and a certain sense of security. How they feel about the whole matter depends on how you feel about it—whether you feel challenged by it or defeated.

Perhaps you can discuss the whole problem with a sympathetic teacher or school principal who can do a great deal to help the youngsters keep a sense of proportion in spending. Some of the parents, too, may be willing to cooperate in developing activities that are inviting without being expensive. They may welcome some leadership in the community toward interests and experiences of different kinds.

But along with this your children will be learning that some things are more important to them than others, and that life consists of choosing the greater values from among the many that are offered.

News and notes

The White House Conference

The Child Study Association was well represented at the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth, which was held in Washington in December. In addition to the many members of the Association's Advisory Board who served as White House Conference committee members, speakers, work-group and panel participants, several members of the Board of Directors and staff attended—board members Mrs. Edwin F. Chinlund, Charlotte Adams, Pauline Rush Fadiman, Evelyn Necarsulmer; staff members Mildred B. Beck, Aline B. Auerbach, Elizabeth Bradley, Josette Frank, Sidonie M. Gruenberg, Madeline D. Ross, Frances Ullmann, Anna W. M. Wolff. The Association presented its publications in an eye-catching exhibit.

At a recent meeting, members of the Citizens' Committee on Children of New York City, leaders in local and national work with children and young people, voted to endorse in full the recommendations on child welfare made at the White House Conference. This was the first concrete action taken in New York City to carry out these recommendations.

Publications that result from the White House Conference will be brought to the attention of readers in a future issue of *CHILD STUDY*.

Nursery education

Between 1:30 and 3:30 in the afternoon, March 8, the Child Study Association will hold open house at Association headquarters to participants in the Biennial Conference of the National Association for Nursery Education. On this special field trip being offered to the section on parent and family life education, delegates will have an opportunity to talk with staff members and to examine the nu-

Statement of the Ownership, Management, and Circulation required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Acts of March 3, 1933, and July 2, 1946 (Title 39, United States Code, Section 233), of *CHILD STUDY*, published four times a year, at New York, N. Y., for October 1, 1950.

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Ullmann, Anna W. M. Wolff. The Association presented its publications in an eye-catching exhibit.

Consisting of general sessions and discussion groups on "The Next 50 Years—Children's Opportunities and Our Responsibilities," the conference will be held at the Hotel Commodore in New York, March 7-10.

Childhood education

An estimated two thousand delegates from the United States and other countries will attend the Annual Study Conference of the Association for Childhood Education International to be held in Seattle, Wash., March 26-30. The five-day meeting of teachers and others concerned with the well-being of children from the nursery school through the intermediate grades will include study groups, discussion forums, and general sessions on current problems in this important field of education.

Play schools

"We Meet Our Children: The Impact of Realities on our Goals" is the theme of the Annual Conference of the Play Schools Association, to be held April 14 at Public School 125 in New York. At the morning session, Harold Taylor, president of Sarah Lawrence College, will speak on "Growing Up in a Cold War." Elizabeth Healy Ross, member of the fact finding staff of the White House Conference, will speak on "Facts and Fancies About Children" at the afternoon session. Discussion and workshop groups will complete the day's program.

List of films

A "Selected List of Human Relations Films" is available from the American Jewish Committee, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, at 15 cents per copy. The subjects range from juvenile delinquency to the United Nations, from the atom bomb to mental health, from world trade to public education. The pamphlet includes a brief discussion of the use of films on programs.

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Charlotte Wolff, Business Manager
Sworn to and subscribed before me this

26th day of September, 1950.

(SEAL) Thomas J. Tyler
Notary Public, State of New York
No. 41-4046600

Qualified in Queens County
Cert. filed with New York County Clerk and Register
Term Expires March 30, 1951

A guide to readers who wish to
base group study and
discussion on this issue of Child Study



Suggestions for study groups

We are constantly learning more about the needs of all children, and about the problems of parents, and others, in fulfilling them. We are also learning more about the special emotional needs of children who differ from the larger group—those who differ in seemingly trivial ways; those of a minority race, religion, or cultural background; those with handicaps. It is encouraging to note the increasing efforts of all who work with children to help those who deviate to find themselves. To be sure, there are fundamental likenesses among all children, but differences are universal, too.

In this issue of CHILD STUDY, Professor Kelihier shows us the worry and uncertainty that may be experienced even by the child who differs only slightly from his group. Fundamentally, it is the parents' feeling about a child's difference which sets the tone of the child's own attitudes.

Professor Riesman strikes a thought-provoking note when he writes of the dilemma of the modern individual in trying to steer a course between conformity and the loss of individuality which results from being afraid to be different. Difference, he comments, can be a valued and chosen way of life; conformity may demand a great price, at the expense of inner richness and strength.

Dr. Clark points out that, helpful as are the programs designed to improve intergroup relations, the problem of helping minority-group children to deal with the special problems society creates for them has been generally ignored. This help has been left almost entirely to the parents. These children need first—as do all children—loving acceptance at home. In addition, they need an honest interpretation of the rejection they meet in the world.

In discussing the disabled child, Miss Barton speaks with the understanding and conviction that come of her personal experience with a disability.

The handicapped child *can* find fulfillment and happiness, she tells us, when his parents are able to face the realities of his handicap, and to work for his best development.

As each area of difference is discussed, we learn again the basic principle: When parents can accept themselves and their disappointments about their children, the children can grow and can face the challenge of being different.

For discussion

What can be done to help a child to cope with his deviations? If he is too fat, for instance, or if he cannot play football because he wears glasses? How would you, as a parent, feel about such differences?

Professor Riesman comments that today people are careful not to be "too different." He feels we lose much in not expressing our real difference from others—and in suppressing our individuality. Do you agree? What are some of the values of conforming to group expectations—for a child; for an adult? What might be some of the individual losses in conforming strictly to group expectations of personal conduct and development?

Isobel had to choose between devotion to music and gaining acceptance in her school group. Is it possible to reconcile such desires? How? How might you decide a similar problem in your own home?

Why is the home atmosphere of a child of a minority race, religion, or cultural background so important? In your neighborhood, what is the prevailing attitude toward Negro families? Toward various national groups? What can your study group do to improve understanding of the problems of minority-group parents?

What facilities exist in your community for children who are physically or mentally handicapped?

Are there special classes in the schools, with well-trained teachers? Are clinic or counseling services available?

Miss Barton tells us of the mother who hovered over her handicapped daughter with solicitude and fear. Why did the girl resent this? How may a child feel when her parents deny her disability, or try to ignore it? Why is honesty and a realistic approach to a disability so important to all the family?

Suggested reading

A Handbook on Human Relations. By Everett R. Clinchy. New York: Farrar and Straus, 1949.

Father of the Man: How Your Child Gets His Personality. By W. Allison Davis and Robert J. Havighurst. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1947.

New Hope for the Handicapped. By Howard A. Rusk, M.D., and Eugene J. Taylor. New York: Harper and Bros., 1949.

Parents' Questions. By the Staff of the Child Study Association. New York: Harper and Bros., Rev. Ed., 1947. Chapters 4, 5, 10.

Punishment Without Crime: What You Can Do About Prejudice. By S. Andhil Fineberg. Doubleday, 1949.

The Handicapped Child. By Edith M. Stern with Elsa Castendyck. New York: A. A. Wyn, 1950.

We, the Parents. By Sidonie M. Gruenberg. New York: Harper and Bros., Rev. Ed., 1948. Chapter 2.

Margaret Fayerweather Meigs

1913-1950

We of the Child Study Association were deeply shocked and grieved by the sudden death of Margaret Fayerweather Meigs on November 14, 1950. Mrs. Meigs had been working with the Association since 1945 as a recipient of a Hugh Grant Straus Fellowship.

She was a rarely gifted person, and all her work had distinctive quality. Readers of CHILD STUDY and of the *National Parent-Teacher* will remember the originality and high caliber of her study outlines.

After graduating with highest honors from Swarthmore College in 1934, she was a student teacher at Shady Hill School, Cambridge, Mass. She took her M. A. degree at Teachers College, Columbia University, and later became an assistant in the psychology department.

The field of parent education has lost a most effective worker. SIDONIE M. GRUENBERG

The Handicapped Child

by Edith M. Stern, nationally known writer on child welfare, with Elsa Castendyck, Social Service Consultant for the U. S. Children's Bureau.

• Based on the most authoritative advice by leading medical and psychiatric specialists. Covers Vision and Hearing Defects; Speech Impediments; Crippling Disabilities; Mental Retardation; Cerebral Palsy; Rheumatic Fever and other long illnesses. Each specific disability is analyzed in a separate chapter from both its physical and mental aspects. A realistic, practical book for professional and parent. \$2.00 at your bookstore or order direct from A. A. WYN, Inc., 23 West 47th Street, N. Y. 19.

child study booklists

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What you think of our magazine's new dress

Following are a few of the many comments on the new format of *CHILD STUDY* which have been received by the editors. It takes all kinds of opinions to make a magazine audience, and we'll welcome yours too. Praise or criticism or suggestion—all comments help us in our constant efforts to make *CHILD STUDY* attractive and to increase its usefulness.

It was very exciting indeed to receive the new issue of *CHILD STUDY*. What an attractive and appealing format you have adopted! . . . Subsequent issues are always even better than the first one, so I am looking forward to a lot from *CHILD STUDY* this year. No one knows better than I the work involved in getting a magazine together and deciding upon the new form. Congratulations to all who have contributed. . . .

Editor, New York

You are to be congratulated on the new form of *CHILD STUDY*. It is most attractive. And as always, the articles are so worth-while and helpful. . . .

State Extension Specialist,
Child Development and Family Life,
Massachusetts

Congratulations! The magazine is 100 per cent improved in readability and modernity. . . .

Editor and Author, New York

Your thoughtful journal in one stroke seems to have deteriorated from a fine, *adult* magazine into a whimpering, spineless one. . . .

My husband and I, as well as several friends who have been interested in *CHILD STUDY*, were dismayed at the new format. If improvements were deemed necessary . . . could not these changes have been on an artistic, adult level? . . .

Mother, New York

I am deeply appreciative of the new step taken relative to the cover of *CHILD STUDY*. It is very well done indeed and so suggestive of all this organization tries to do in helping parents to understand their children.

Associate Director of Church Social Work,
District of Columbia

I very much regret the change in format in your magazine. I considered it one of the most attractive and readable of the journals that we used to receive. The new size, shiny paper, and unusual pink

shade of the new journal are to me all changes for the worse. I should much prefer to see your old standard style revived. . . .

Child Development Expert, Connecticut

I was thrilled with the new *CHILD STUDY*. The format is certainly a great improvement, the material better than ever, and I think you have all done a great job. Congratulations!

Grandmother, New York

I heartily approve of your magazine's "new dress"! It's a *great* improvement! I'm hoping that the three subscriptions I just sent in will start with this number, which is particularly interesting.

Mother, New York

The old magazine was a much better size; it was a "comfortable" magazine to hold and carry. It was substantial enough in cover-paper quality to wear well, and the dull-finish paper throughout was easier to read than a glossy paper is. . . .

The old magazine had dignity; it was professional in appearance. . . . Possibly the color of the cover might have been changed, as it was a bit drab, but—. The nursery-wall pink and the Milne toddler on the stairs were rather a shock to a seasoned subscriber, and I missed the listing of lead articles on the cover.

My admiration and satisfaction for the contents of the magazine remain unchanged.

Mother, California

CHILD STUDY is a magazine of such unquestioned excellence, so that is why I write to tell you of the disappointment I feel in its new dress. I don't agree that it is "easier to read and use." . . .

Thank you for a sane, sensible, uncluttered magazine. There's lots I do appreciate!

College Librarian, Michigan

As a subscriber to *CHILD STUDY* for many years, I want to congratulate you on your magazine's "new dress." It adds greatly to the warmth and general attractiveness of the magazine. Especially is this made possible by the smooth-surface paper, which permits prints from photographs.

Father, California

We like the new format of *CHILD STUDY*. It is more cheerful and easier to read and file.

Psychologist and Educational Assistant,
Montreal

The new format of *CHILD STUDY*—first rate!
Parent, New Jersey